

## INTRODUCTION

Until 1961, many parents of mentally retarded persons in Minnesota had to choose between keeping their child in the home and sending the child to a state institution due to a lack of community services. Day activity centers for retarded persons were available in only seven of the state's 87 counties,

In 1961, the Minnesota Legislature passed a pilot project day time activity center statute appropriating \$36,000 to reimburse up to fifty percent of operating costs of pilot project centers selected by the Commissioner of Public Welfare.

Since 1961, day time activity centers have grown tremendously. Presently, ninety-one (91) state-funded day activity centers serve 1, 448 retarded persons in 73 counties in Minnesota. Since 1968, 737 retarded persons have been placed in the school system, workshops, competitive employment, and residential facilities through the efforts of day activity center services. Undoubtedly, DAC services have helped many retarded persons develop to their full potential.

## PURPOSE

A survey was conducted in October of 1970 by the Minnesota Association for Retarded Children to assess the growth, development, and benefits of day activity center services throughout the state. Obstacles which hinder effective growth and development are discussed as are the effectiveness of day activity center services.

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## METHOD

A questionnaire was sent to each state-funded day activity center in Minnesota consisting of four parts - (1) General Data (2) Rent and Maintenance (3) School Information (4) Population Movement. (See Appendix A.)

The data is analyzed by regions using the six planning regions established by the 1969 Mental Retardation Facilities Construction Plan. (See Appendix B.)

An overall state-wide analysis of DAC services is given in the beginning of this document along with recommendations which we believe will aid DAC'S in growth and development. A regional analysis then follows indicating the obstacles which hinder effective growth and development along with the effectiveness of day activity center services,

## DEFINITION OF TERMS

(1) Full-time Day Activity Center: One which serves retarded persons 25 hours per week or more.

(2) Part-time Day Activity Center: One which serves retarded persons 24 hours per week or less.

(3) Workshops: A facility having an identifiable program designed exclusively to provide short-term or long-term work-training or limited employment.

(4) Behavioral Problem: A retarded person whose behavior is hyperactive or who is emotionally handicapped,

(5) Management Problem: A retarded person who is either/or non-ambulatory, not toilet trained, cannot speak, physically handicapped (excluding non-ambulatory).

(6) Statistical Need: The 1969 Mental Retardation Facilities Construction Plan projects that DAC services are needed by one per 1,000 total population. Thus, if a given area has a population of 5,000 the statistical need is five.

(7) Residential Facilities: All residential facilities for retarded persons except state institutions.

(8) Trainable: A retarded person with an I.Q. between 30 and 50, and who can reasonably be expected to profit in a social, emotional or physical way from a program of teaching and training is a trainable child. The number of trainable persons being served by school districts was taken from the 1969-1970 annual school year report prepared by the Department of Education.

(9) School-Age: The State Law (Sec 120.17, Subdivision 1) states that school age for a mentally retarded person is between the ages of five to 21. However, this varies from county to county. This survey has left it up to the discretion of each DAC to define what considered school age is in their area.

## STATE-WIDE ANALYSIS OF DAC'S IN MINNESOTA

### LOCATION AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

The State of Minnesota consists of 87 counties served by 91 day activity centers. Four of these DAC's are satellites of a main DAC. Sixty-two (62) of the counties have at least one DAC, while 12 counties use DAC's in other counties. Thirteen (13) counties have no retarded children receiving DAC services, (Refer to Chart #1)

Of the 91 DAC's, 58 operate on a full-time basis (64%), while thirty-three (33) operate on a part-time basis (36%). All 91 DAC's are in operation nine or more months per year. Average rent and maintenance payments are \$177 a month ranging from a low of \$31 per month, to a high of \$504 per month.

Fifty-five of the 91 DAC's or 60% share their facilities with other groups such as church religious classes, while the remaining 36 or 40% do not share their facilities. In 47 DAC's, the physical building is a church facility. Only nine DAC's own their buildings.

Forty-eight (48) of the 91 DAC's or 53% would move if money were available, whereas 43 or 47% would not move. Of these 48 DAC's who would move if money were available, 40 share their facilities with other groups such as church religious classes. The majority of DAC's have a degree of dissatisfaction with their present physical set-up. (Refer to Chart #1)

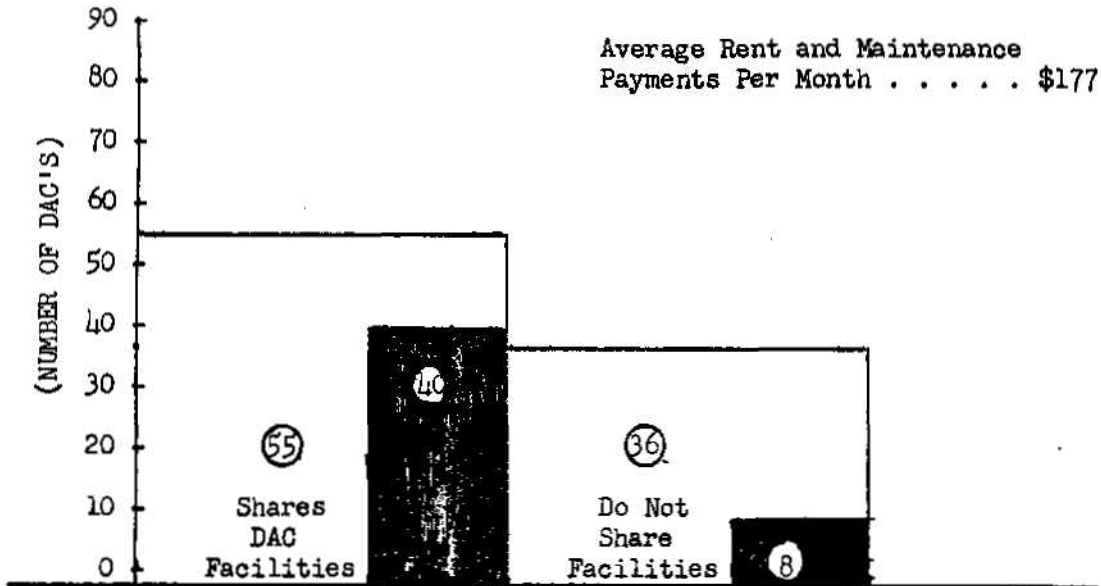
Chart #1  
COUNTIES SERVED BY DAC'S

PLANNING REGIONS	COUNTIES WITH ONE OR MORE DAC'S	BUT SERVED BY DAC'S IN SURROUNDING COUNTIES	NOT SERVED BY ANY DAC'S
REGION 1 (NORTHWEST 26 COUNTIES)	12 - 9	6 - 8	8
REGION 2 (NORTHEAST 12 COUNTIES)	8 - 0	1 - 8	3
REGION 3 (SOUTHWEST 22 COUNTIES)	19 - 4	3 - 17	0
REGION 4 (METROPOLITAN 7 COUNTIES)	7 - 2	0 - 0	0
REGION 5 (SOUTHCENTRAL 7 COUNTIES)	6 - 2	1 - 4	0
REGION 6 (SOUTHEAST 13 COUNTIES)	10 - 3	1 - 1	2
TOTAL	62 - 20	12 - 38	13

- - Number of counties with DAC's operating only on a part-time basis
- - Number of retarded persons served in DAC's in each region although no DAC exists in their county

GRAPH #1

DISSATISFACTION OF PRESENT FACILITIES



\*Circled numbers indicates number of DAC's affected

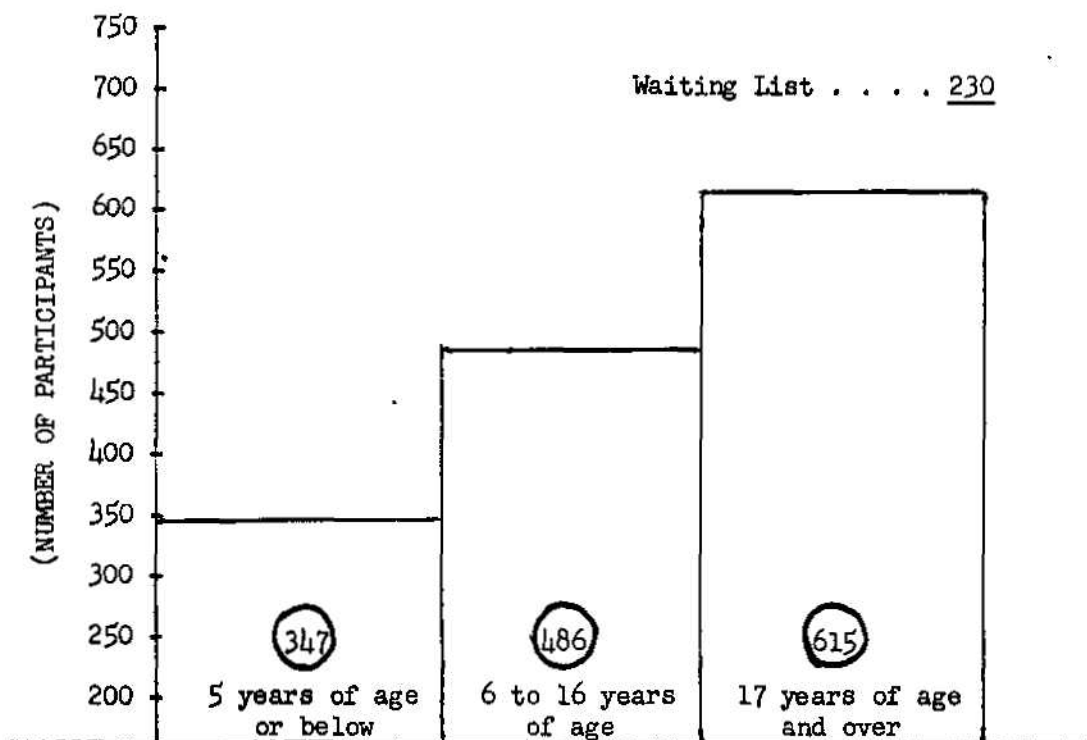
\*Black portion indicates those DAC's who would move if money were available

NUMBER SERVED AND CHARACTERISTICS OF POPULATION

The 91 DAC's in operation in Minnesota have a present enrollment of 1,448 participants with 230 on a waiting list. Seven hundred and forty-six (746) of the participants are male, 702 are female. All but 100 of the participants are ambulatory. In regards to age, 347 participants or 24% are five years of age or below, 486 or 34% are six to 16 years of age, and 615 or 42% are 17 years of age and over. Graph #2 illustrates this data.

GRAPH #2

AGE SPAN OF PARTICIPANTS IN DAC'S



(AGE SPAN)

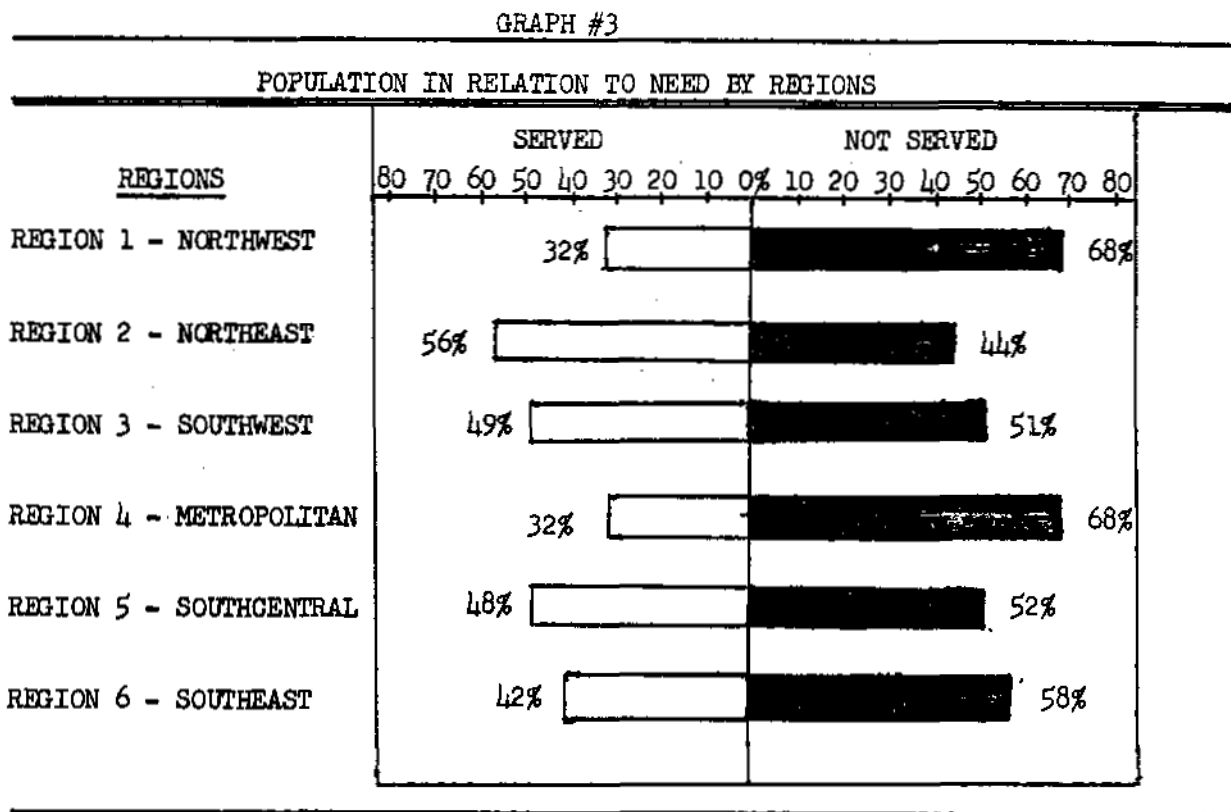
\*Circled numbers indicate number of retarded persons in each age bracket

POPULATION IN RELATION TO NEED

At the present time, the 91 DAC's in Minnesota serve only 1,448 retarded persons. It has been estimated by the Department of Public Welfare that one retarded person per 1,000 total population needs day activity center services. Total population for the State of Minnesota is 3,770,000 (1970 census). Taking into consideration the formula of one per 1,000 total population, 3,770 retarded persons need DAC services. Only 1,448 are being served, leaving an unmet need of 2,322 retarded

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persons needing DAC services. Percentage-wise, only 38% of retarded persons needing DAC services are being served, while 62% who could benefit from DAC services are not being served. Graph #3 illustrates the need for each region of the state using the planning regions as boundaries.



#### TRANSPORTATION

Transportation is a major problem in serving retarded persons who need DAC services. Many cities and towns in each county are approximately 15 to 20 miles distance (one-way) to a DAC.

Many parents are unable to travel long distances in order for their retarded child to attend a DAC. Some DAC's provide transportation through use of a rented vehicle. Other DAC's purchase their own vehicle for transportation. However, this cost (which is quite substantial) is passed on to the parents in the form of tuition; often time's parents cannot cope with such high costs.



Under the present laws, the school system has the option of whether or not to provide transportation to retarded persons attending DAC's. However, even if the school system does provide transportation, the annual maximum allotment of \$225 per person is often too little to cover transportation costs annually, Maps showing location of DAC's in relation to cities and towns with a scale of miles to demonstrate distances are contained in this document.

### CONCLUSIONS

(1) Although there are 91 state-funded DAC's, all children are not being served. This survey shows that only 38% of the need is being met.

(2) Fifty-five percent (55%) of DAC's are dissatisfied with their present facilities. A relationship exists for those DAC's who share their facilities with other groups, and the desire to move to another facility.

(3) Transportation appears to be a major problem in serving all retarded children who need DAC services. Many towns and cities are 15 to 20 miles distance (one-way) to a DAC.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

(1) State funding for day activity center programs should be increased to meet the needs of present centers, for their expansion, and to establish new centers.

(2) Rent should be subject to state reimbursement which would aid DAC's in finding proper facilities.

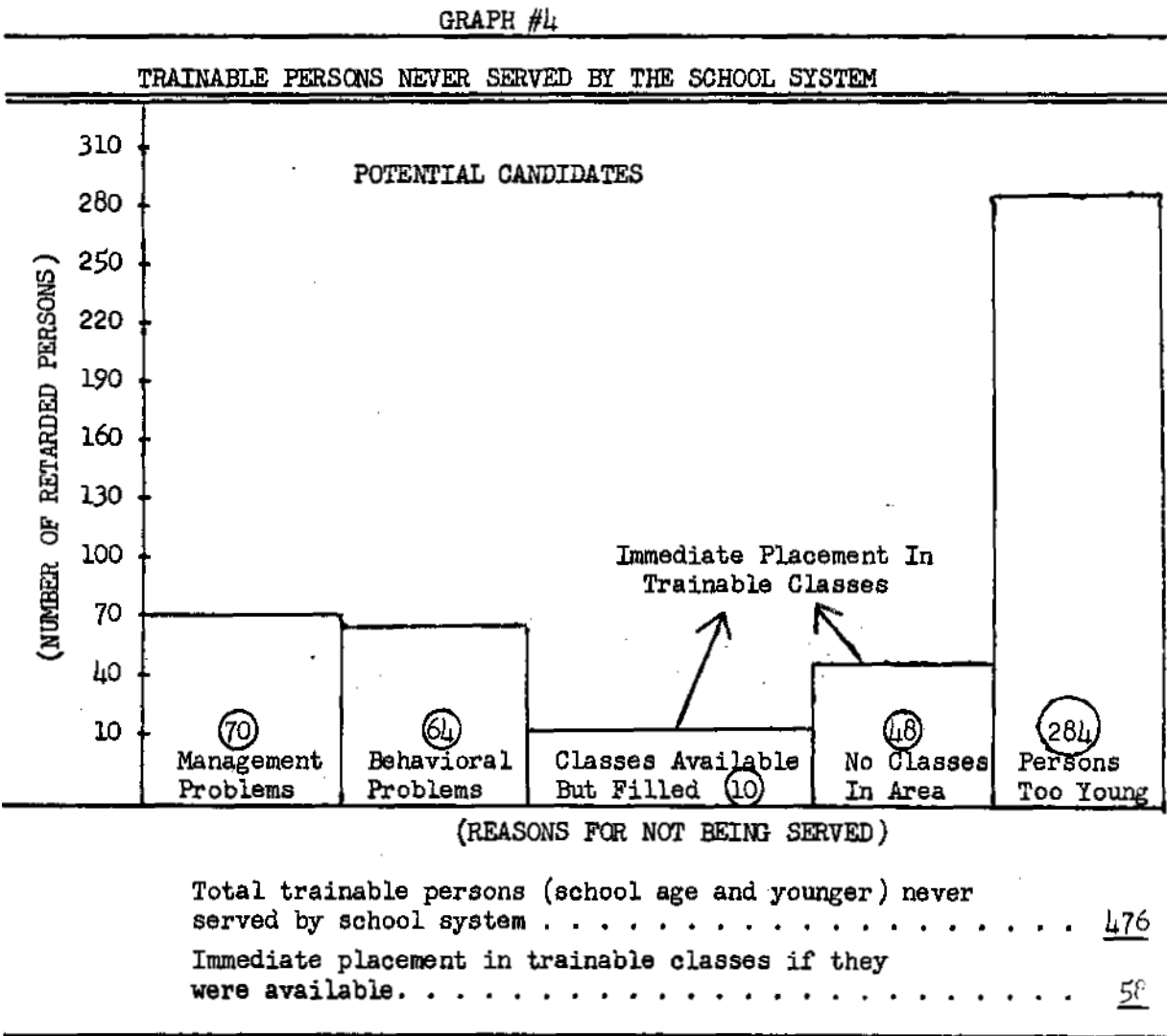
(3) The present law, which allows school districts to transport children to day activity centers and receive state aids, should be made mandatory.

(4) State aids for transportation of handicapped children should be increased from the present \$225 per year per child.

DAC'S RELATIONSHIP TO THE PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM

TRAINABLE PERSONS SERVED BY DAY ACTIVITY CENTERS

Of the 1, 448 retarded persons served by the DAC's in Minnesota, 977 participants or 67% are in the trainable range. Four hundred and seventy six (476) of these 977 trainable persons (49%) are school age and younger, and have never been served by the school system. Graph #4 illustrates this data indicating the reasons why trainable retarded persons were never served by the school system. The circled numbers indicate the number of retarded persons affected.



Graph #4 illustrates that 476 trainable retarded persons never served by the school system are potential candidates for trainable classes. Fifty-eight (58) of these potential candidates (12%) could be placed in trainable classes immediately if they were available.

#### AVAILABILITY OF TRAINABLE CLASSES IN MINNESOTA

At the present time in Minnesota only 103 school districts out of 476 serve trainable retarded children. The 103 school districts which do have trainable classes serve 1,208 retarded persons on a full-time basis. Another 27 retarded persons attend trainable classes on a part-time basis. See Chart #2.

CHART #2

AVAILABILITY OF TRAINABLE CLASSES			
REGION	NUMBER OF POTENTIAL TRAINABLE PERSONS	NUMBER OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS OFFERING TRAIN- ABLE CLASSES	NUMBER OF COUNTIES WITH NO TRAINABLE CLASSES
REG. #1, NORTHWEST	28 - (11)	23 - 158	8
REG. #2, NORTHEAST	92 - (4)	13 - 178	5
REG. #3, SOUTHWEST	68 - (19)	26 - 202	5
REG. #4, METROPOLITAN	221 - (3)	20 - 530	0
REG. #5, SOUTH CENTRAL	32 - (13)	6 - 49	2
REG. #6, SOUTHEAST	35 - (8)	15 - 118	1
TOTAL	476 - (58)	103 - 1,235	21

\*Circled number indicates immediate placement in trainable classes

\*Number in square indicates number of trainable retarded children being served in trainable classes

#### DISCUSSION

Day activity centers should not be thought of as a substitute for trainable classes in the public school system. School systems are better equipped, and well-staffed to teach retarded children. DAC's should be

used when a retarded child cannot cope with a school environment due to management or behavioral problems, but it should not be an end in itself. The end goal of a school-age retarded child in a DAC should be inclusion into the school system. The end goal of a post-school retarded person in a DAC should be competitive or sheltered employment.

The end goal for a DAC of placing a retarded child in the school system cannot be realized if classes do not exist or are filled to capacity in an area. Some areas in the state do not have enough retarded trainable children to start trainable classes. When this occurs, school districts should combine so as to have enough children to start a trainable class.

#### CONCLUSIONS

(1) There are 476 trainable DAC participants who are school age and younger and have never been served by the school system.

(2) Of these 476 trainable retarded persons, 58 or 12% could immediately attend trainable classes if they were available. Of the remaining trainable retarded persons (school age and younger), 60% are too young, 15% are management problems, 13% are behavioral problems. However, all are potential candidates for inclusion into trainable classes.

(3) Only 103 school districts out of 476 serve trainable retarded persons. Twenty-one (21) counties have no trainable classes available.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

(1) Mandatory special education should be required for all handicapped children of school age through an amendment to the special education laws.

(2) Sufficient funds should be appropriated to support preschool education for all children with handicaps,

(3) Inter-district units should be established throughout the state to improve the delivery of special education services for handicapped children. This would help those school districts which do not have an adequate number of handicapped children to start a class.

(4) Special services, which schools may purchase, should be expanded to include, in addition to other necessary services, day activity center services and vocational training for handicapped children. This would place legal responsibility on the school system for educating all handicapped children.

#### POPULATION MOVEMENT

##### PLACEMENTS IN COMMUNITY FACILITIES BY DAC'S

Since January 1968, the 91 DAC's serving the State of Minnesota have made a total of 737 placements. Chart #3 illustrates the placements made and numbers affected.

CHART #3

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##### PLACEMENTS BY DAC'S SINCE JANUARY 1968

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PLACEMENTS	NUMBER OF RETARDED PERSONS PLACED
REGULAR CLASSES	6
EDUCABLE CLASSES	121
TRAINABLE CLASSES	291
KINDERGARDEN	33
WORKSHOPS	76
COMPETITIVE EMPLOYMENT	46
RESIDENTIAL FACILITIES	112
SPECIALIZED DAC'S	36
OTHER	<u>16</u>
TOTAL	737

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Undoubtedly, DAC's serve a useful function in that they prepare retarded persons for their next level of development.

Many more retarded persons attending DAC's could be placed in various community services if they were available. Chart #4 illustrates this data.

CHART #4

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COMMUNITY PLACEMENTS WHICH WOULD BE BENEFICIAL FOR DAC PARTICIPANTS, AND REASONS FOR LACK OF PLACEMENT		
TYPE OF PLACEMENT	NUMBER OF RETARDED PERSONS WHO CAN BENEFIT	REASONS FOR LACK OF PLACEMENT
TRAINABLE CLASSES	58	NOT AVAILABLE
WORKSHOPS	129	NOT AVAILABLE
COMPETITIVE EMPLOYMENT	6	NOT AVAILABLE
RESIDENTIAL FACILITIES	<u>13</u>	NOT AVAILABLE
TOTAL	206	

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Workshops are the largest need for DAC's state-wide. Chart #3 shows that 129 retarded persons could benefit from workshops, but are not placed because of lack of such facilities. Presently, only 20 workshop facilities exist in the state of Minnesota.

#### CONCLUSIONS

(1) DAC's serve a purposeful function of preparing retarded persons for their next level of development.

(2) Workshops are sorely lacking in the state of Minnesota,

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

(1) State appropriations for sheltered workshops should be increased to \$1,800,000 for the biennium.

(2) Funds should be available to expand Department of Welfare consultation to day activity centers. These consultants could aid the instructors at DAC's in regards to training and development of retarded persons which will, in turn, help retarded persons develop to their next level of development.

(3) State-funds should be appropriated to non-profit agencies on a 75/25% matching basis to aid in the development of community residential facilities. This would provide those retarded persons with a semi-independent living situation which many are capable of accomplishing.

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